

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 17518 261557Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 EA-10 IO-13 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03
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R 261546Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4804
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 17518

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, AF, UR, ECON
SUBJECT: MFA OFFICER ON AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 5655

1. BRITISH EMBASSY HAS INFORMED US OF A RECENT CON-
VERSATION WITH MFA AFGHAN DESK OFFICER GAVRILOV.
GAVRILOV SERVED RECENTLY IN KABUL AND WAS "LOQUACIOUS"
DURING MEETING IN DISCUSSING INTERNAL SITUATION IN
AFGHANISTAN AND AFGHAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. AMONG THE
MAIN POINTS MADE BY GAVRILOV WERE:

-- THE NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISORS HAS INCREASED SINCE
APRIL AND THERE ARE NOW "ONE OR TWO" SOVIET ADVISORS
IN EACH MINISTRY. GAVRILOV ATTEMPTED TO MINIMIZE
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS BY STATING THAT OTHER
FOREIGN ADVISORS CONTINUE TO WORK IN AFGHAN MINISTRIES
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 17518 261557Z

(E.G., BRITISH IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND WEST
GERMANS IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR);

-- HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY FIRM OR RAPID MOVE AGAINST
AFGHAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS;

-- HE ANTICIPATED THAT SOME INTERNAL OPPOSITION WOULD

DEVELOP TO THE PRESENT REGIME BUT IMPLIED THAT THIS
WOULD BE MANAGEABLE;

-- IN DISCUSSING THE RECENT AMBASSADORIAL APPOINTMENTS
HE REFUSED TO CONCEDE THAT THEY WERE A PURGE, BUT WAS
DEFENSIVE IN DISCUSSING THEM; AND

-- HE CONFIRMED THAT MOST OF THE AFGHAN REGIONAL
MILITARY COMMANDERS HAVE BEEN REPLACED.

2. ON ECONOMIC RELATIONS GAVRILOV STATED THAT NO
NEW AFGHAN-SOVIET AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN CONCLUDED
SINCE APRIL, AND THAT REPORTS IN THE AFGHAN PRESS
OF NEW AGREEMENTS WERE INACCURATE. HE SAID THAT
THE CONTRACTS WHICH HAVE BEEN SIGNED ARE ALL IN
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1975 CREDIT AGREEMENT AND THAT
THEY REPRESENT CONCLUSION OF MATTERS THAT HAD BEEN
UNDER DISCUSSION EARLIER. HE ALSO SAID THAT NO
NEW CREDITS WERE UNDER CONSIDERATION. HE DID
NOTE THAT A SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION HAD
RECENTLY VISITED KABUL AND HAD SIGNED A MEMORANDUM
OF UNDERSTANDING ON AFGHAN STUDENTS IN USSR.

3. GAVRILOV NOTED THAT IRAN IS CONTINUING ITS AID
PROJECTS, AND SAID THAT THIS IS GOOD. HE ALSO SAID
THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT CHINA IS CONTINUING ITS
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 17518 261557Z

AID PROJECTS, BUT DID NOT DESCRIBE THIS AS "GOOD."

4. COMMENT: WHILE MANY OF GAVRILOV'S COMMENTS
ARE OBVIOUSLY SELF-SERVING, WE PASS THEM ON FOR
WHAT THEY MAY BE WORTH. WE ARE STRUCK BY HIS
ADMISSION THAT THERE ARE NOW SOVIET ADVISORS IN
ALL AFGHAN MINISTRIES, AND ALSO THE PAINS HE TOOK
TO DENY THAT NEW ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN
CONCLUDED SINCE APRIL. TOON

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